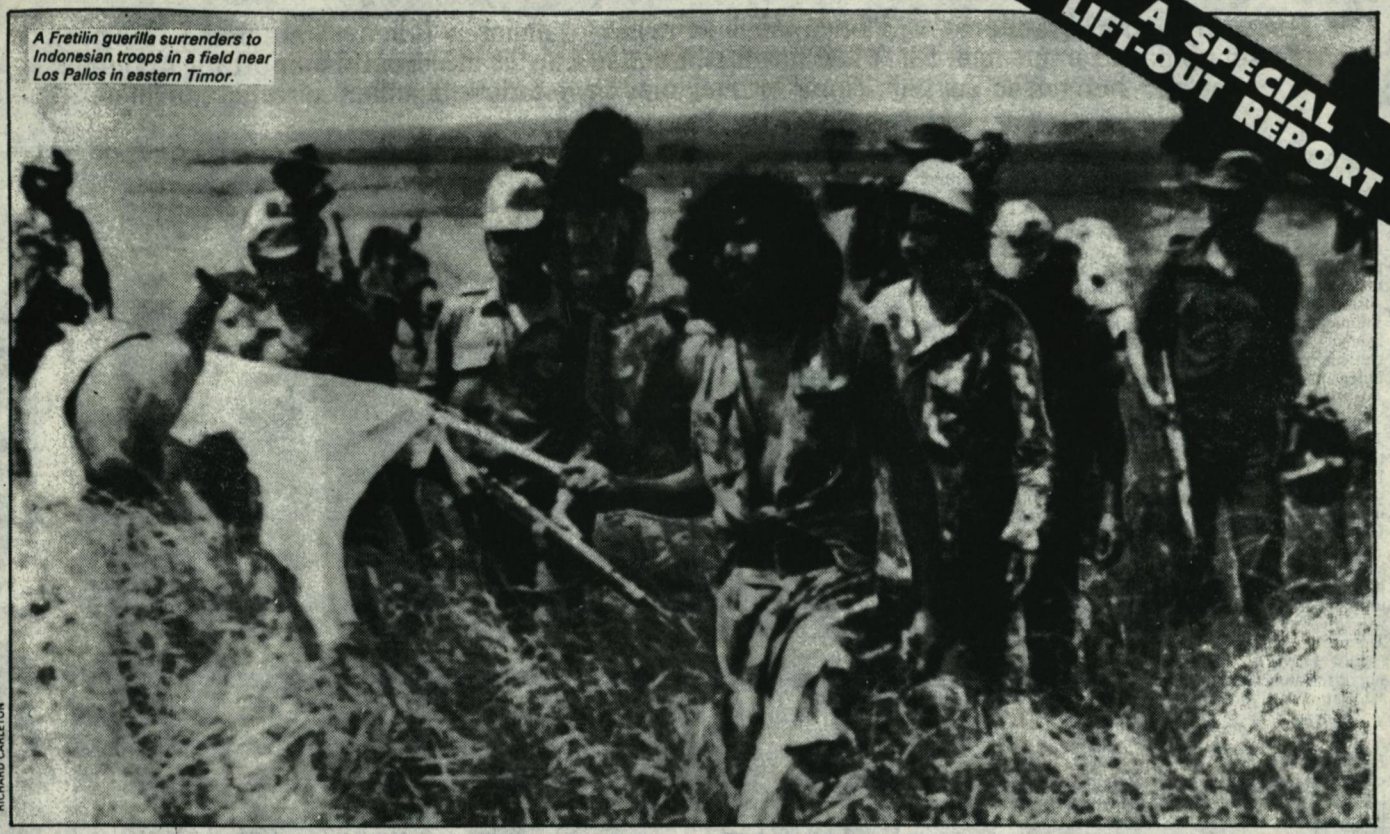
CIDAC
TL 3617

CIDAC
Centro de Documentação

A SPECIAL LIFT-OUT REPORT



A Fretilin guerilla surrenders to Indonesian troops in a field near Los Pallos in eastern Timor.

RICHARD CARLETON

THE TIMOR PAPERS

The Argentine invasion of the Falklands has provoked a vigorous British response based on the principle that aggression must never be allowed to pay.

The current situation is in strong contrast to the international apathy towards the 1975 Indonesian invasion of Portuguese Timor. That invasion was allowed to succeed. Tens of thousands of Timorese died in the process.

DALE VAN ATTA* and BRIAN TOOHEY have gained access to a large range of classified US documents that provide a unique insight into one of the least publicised wars in modern history.

The material is drawn primarily from the Central Intelligence Agency, its military counterpart the Defence Intelligence Agency, the super-secret National Security Agency, and the State Department.

Unless otherwise stated the documentary extracts published below come from the National Intelligence Daily.

The news sheet, published by the Director of the CIA for an elite, specially cleared audience in Washington, was on the President's desk early each morning in 1975.

The documents reveal conclusively that the US Government had many months warning of Indonesian invasion plans. Under intelligence-sharing arrangements with Australia, a large part of this information was passed on to Canberra.

Indeed, The National Times understands that much of the intercepted communications that formed the core of the US intelligence came from radio antennae at the base run by the Australian Defence Signals Directorate at Coonawarra, near Darwin.

The masthead from the CIA's "newspaper" of August 29, 1975, in which Indonesia was said to be ready to invade.

The intelligence data, published in this exclusive National Times account, shows for the first time the full dimensions of the Indonesian determination to take over its small neighbour and its subsequent efforts to cover up the behaviour of its occupation forces.

These measures even extended to serious planning to sink a ship bringing in a UN envoy.

One of the most sensitive aspects of the Top Secret intelligence relates to how Indonesia operated a two-track policy in its moves to conquer Timor.

One arm of the policy called for a full-scale invasion. The other involved clandestine warfare, including possibly terrorism, that was designed to subvert Timor so that it would fall into Indonesian hands without the need for massive military intervention.

The clandestine program operated for more than a year before the Indonesians resorted to outright invasion in December 1975.

The CIA observed – without comment – that the activities of the Indonesian Special Forces in Timor were intended to provoke the very chaos that Jakarta used to justify the invasion.

Other features of the documents are the covert supply of arms by Malaysia for use against the Timorese, and the Indonesian sensitivity to any US or Australian disapproval of its behaviour towards Timor.

As events turned out, neither the US nor Australia utilised this potential leverage to restrain the Indonesians. In fact the documents refer to President Soeharto drawing support from the attitude of the then Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, on Timor.

While the use of communications intercepts and sources in Jakarta allowed extremely detailed intelligence reporting, actual US sources on the ground in Timor appeared to be weak – a position that underscored the importance to the US of the spy being run in Dili by the Australian Secret Intelligence Service.

Part One of this exclusive series exposes the secret background to one of the sorriest episodes in the recent history of our region.

*DALE VAN ATTA is a reporter on the staff of the Washington columnist Jack Anderson, specialising in security affairs.

August 11: A false calm: "Representatives from the Portuguese Government and Timorese political parties will meet in Macao later this week to talk about a decolonisation plan for Portuguese Timor.

"Indonesian intelligence officials plan to monitor the Macao talks to safeguard the interests of the pro-Indonesia party, which is largely a product of Jakarta's clandestine activities in Timor.

"General Ali Murtopo, who has been charged with overseeing the decolonisation procedure for the Indonesians, believes the Portuguese will arrange matters so that Timor is eventually incorporated into Indonesia.

August 12: Now the alarm bells ring: "Indonesian military officials have advised President Soeharto that parties hostile to Indonesia were responsible for the show of force in Portuguese Timor this weekend. They have recommended immediate Indonesian military action against the colony.

"Our information about the situation in Timor is sketchy. Initial reports indicate that members of the Timor Democratic Union Party, an anti-communist pro-independence group, occupied communications centres, the airport and the police station in Dili on Saturday and Sunday; they then laid siege to military headquarters. It is not clear, however, whether they were seeking to take full control of the government from the Portuguese authorities.

"Local Portuguese troops, most of whom were apparently out of the capital conducting political education missions in the countryside have not reacted.

"Last fall [September, ed.], Soeharto's top military advisers advocated a military move against Timor, but the President preferred to rely on a clandestine political and propaganda campaign. He was concerned about Indonesia's international reputation and particularly about the reaction in the US and Australia.

Continued on page 18

Reprinted by Tapol, 8a Treport St., London, SW18 2BP With the permission of the National Times

Teams of Timorese refugees who have received military training in Indonesia are being sent back to set up base camps near Dili. They may be intended only as strong-arm support for Apodeti, the pro-Indonesian party in Timor, or they may have orders to launch terrorist activities.

Continued from page 17

"These same considerations still apply, and Soeharto's inclination will probably be to await developments in Timor before committing himself."

On the same day the National Intelligence Bulletin elaborated on Indonesia's covert operations. "Over the past year, Indonesia has organised a large clandestine and propaganda operation designed to assure the peaceful absorption of Timor into Indonesia. As part of this effort, Indonesian intelligence officials have actively courted the leaders of the pro-independence groups, seeking to convince them that Timor cannot be viable as an independent State and that they should join forces with Jakarta."

August 13: "Information about events in Portuguese Timor remains sketchy. London radio has announced that the Timor Democratic Union Party has given the Portuguese governor in Dili an ultimatum demanding immediate independence for the colony and the arrest of members of the leftist Fretilin Party, the Democratic Union's principal rival for power.

"Indonesia apparently will try to take advantage of the situation in Timor to increase its activities on behalf of the pro-Indonesia Apodeti Party. Indonesian special forces units based in Indonesian Timor were already working with Apodeti to hold public demonstrations in Portuguese Timor to coincide with Indonesian independence day August 17. They may now try to encourage Apodeti supporters to be more aggressive in demanding immediate association with Indonesia."

August 15: "Indonesian President Soeharto reportedly has decided to authorise direct military intervention in Portuguese Timor if he is convinced that communist elements were involved in the recent seizure of power or if the lives of pro-Indonesia Apodeti party members are threatened.

"The situation in Timor is apparently deteriorating. Violent clashes are said to have taken place between rival factions both in Dili and in the interior. Dependents of Portuguese citizens in the colony are being evacuated to Australia.

"Lisbon has sent a special envoy to Timor on a fact-finding mission. Officials in Jakarta are apparently co-operating with the envoy, suggesting that Indonesia still hopes that Portugal can control the situation."

Again the National Intelligence Bulletin added more on the clandestine operations:

"Indonesian leaders continue to suspect that leftist Portuguese military officers in the colony instigated the current trouble, perhaps making use of local anti-communist elements to put Jakarta off guard. Radio broadcasts from Dili reportedly have called for a united front of pro-independence forces and warned that force will be used against those who seek integration with another country.

"Intelligence officials associated with Indonesia's year-long clandestine operations against the colony see in the confused situation a chance to turn events to the advantage of the pro-Indonesia party. Special forces units located in Indonesian Timor are preparing teams of Timorese refugees to cross the border and establish guerilla bases near Dili and elsewhere. The teams have been given military training and may be used to stimulate a popular uprising."

The possibility of Indonesian-sponsored terrorism is raised in the Weekly Review under the heading "Timor: Waves in a Backwater": "Teams of Timorese refugees who have received military training in Indonesia are being sent back to set up base camps near Dili. There is no indication whether Indonesian special forces units will also participate, nor is it clear what the teams are expected to do. They may be intended only as strong-arm support for Apodeti, the pro-Indonesian party in Timor, or they may have orders to launch terrorist activities."

August 18: The US attitude is a definite factor in Indonesian behaviour: "Soeharto continues to worry about an adverse reaction from the US, particularly since a move against Timor at this time would come only a few weeks after his visit to Washington. Top military commanders, however, still favour swift action because they fear that the situation will soon turn irrevocably against pro-Jakarta elements in Timor and result in a threat to Indonesian security.

"Intelligence officials in charge of the clandestine operation inside Timor have stepped up their activities. On Saturday 50 Indonesian-trained Timorese guerillas reportedly crossed the border into the Portuguese territory. Their immediate mission is not known, but they are probably assigned to assist pro-Indonesia Timorese who have reportedly been violently attacked in recent days.

"Indonesia's clandestine activities in Timor may lead to a more serious breakdown in law and order, forcing a military decision upon Soeharto."

August 20: There is no doubt that the supposed limits on the use of US military equipment is clear to the Indonesians:

"Jakarta has delivered a note to Lisbon about developments in Timor. The note stresses concern about the safety of Indonesian citizens in Timor and asserts that recent developments are contrary to a prior understanding with Lisbon about the course of decolonisation. Indonesia calls on Lisbon to restore order and resume the process of an orderly transfer of power to the Timorese. Lisbon, while it may sympathise with the Indonesian position, is unable to act.

"Indonesian military contingency preparations are continuing, as are clandestine operations inside Portuguese Timor. According to an intercepted message, a local Timorese leader is ready to call publicly for integration with Indonesia. Jakarta may well be planning to stage a series of such declarations in the near future.

"President Soeharto evidently is still delaying on a decision to authorise military action. Apparently, a major consideration on his part is that an invasion of Timor, if it comes, must be justified as an act in defence of Indonesian security. He is acutely aware that conditions of US military assistance to Indonesia specifically limit the use of this equipment to defensive purposes."

OLIVER STREWE

More than 10,000 Fretilin supporters turn out peacefully to show their strength in early 1975. By August, the CIA reported that Indonesia's clandestine activities could lead to a serious breakdown in law and order.

President Soeh tainty about t

Adam Malik, For about internat

Ramos Horta intercepted up

August 21: "The Portuguese military commander in chief in Timor yesterday radioed Lisbon that he has lost control of the situation in the territory.

"According to the message, some military units have revolted and joined radical pro-independence forces. Shooting has occurred in Dili, and the city reportedly is in a state of confusion and panic.

"When word of the deteriorating situation in Dili reaches Jakarta, President Soeharto will have a difficult time overruling his military commanders on using force. At a meeting on Monday, Soeharto evidently vetoed the use of force at this time and preferred to give Lisbon a chance to restore order in Timor."

August 22: "Portuguese Foreign Minister Ruivo held separate consultations with the Indonesian and Australian ambassadors Wednesday night on the rapidly deteriorating situation in Timor.

"According to the Australian ambassador, Lisbon:

- "would like Australian assistance in evacuating some 500 Portuguese and foreign nationals from Timor;
- "admitted there was little possibility of returning to the decolonisation timetable agreed upon in Macao in June;
- "planned to leave the governor and a staff of about 70 behind in Timor as a symbolic presence and to try to reach a modus vivendi with the warring Timorese political factions;
- "was considering requesting international political assistance in the form of a good offices committee in which it hoped both Indonesia and Australia would participate.

"Ruivo said Lisbon would make a similar approach to the Indonesians and would also alert the International Red Cross.

"Australia, for domestic political reasons, is unlikely to want to become overtly involved in the Timor imbroglio beyond rendering humanitarian assistance. Indonesian President Soeharto, on the other hand, will probably view Lisbon's approach as offering a way out of his present dilemma. He could authorise Indonesian military intervention in Timor on the grounds that he has tacit Portuguese support to restore order and protect the lives of innocent people."

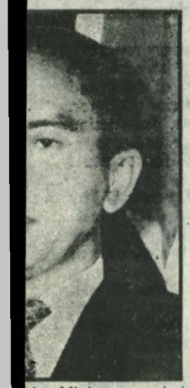
On the same day the Weekly Review summarised the situation under the heading "Timor: Indonesian Shadow Play".

"Communication and support personnel have been ordered to airfields near Timor, and fuel stocks and other

Embassy contacts agree that Soeharto is "mystically" sure Timor will eventually become Indonesian. Thus, drawing support from [Prime Minister] Whitlam's declaration of Australian non-intervention, he awaits a specific Portuguese request for him to take action.

rto: "mystical" cer- e events in Timor.

President Gomez of Portugal: held back for domestic political reasons.



ign Minister: worried nal consequences.

General Ali Murtopo: headed the clandestine operations inside Timor.

Fretilin leader: CIA proach to Indonesia.

Lopez da Cruz: arrested by his own party for meeting with Indonesians.

equipment are also being dispatched. Some teams of Indonesian-trained Timorese guerillas have been sent across the border to aid pro-Indonesian partisans, and there is evidence that Jakarta may be planning to stage a series of public demonstrations favouring integration by local Timorese leaders."

August 23: "According to a top Indonesian intelligence official, Jakarta will ask Lisbon to initiate a request either directly or through the UN for Indonesian assistance.

"The Portuguese are concerned about the bloodshed on Timor, but realise they are in no position to stop it. Consequently they may well give the Indonesian approach a sympathetic hearing."

On the same day the DIA reported that "The Indonesian consul in Dili has urgently requested his government to send a ship to evacuate him and the Nationalist Chinese consul, the only remaining diplomats, because of the continuing anarchy in Portuguese Timor. An Indonesian destroyer escort is expected to arrive within the next two days.

"The Portuguese control only the port area, which is crowded with people seeking evacuation. The port is protected by two platoons of paracommandos. Mortars captured from the government armoury reportedly are firing into the city, where armed clashes between contending Timorese factions are said to be continuing. The Timor Democratic Union, which started the turmoil, now calls itself the National Front. Union leaders reportedly have arrested their president, Lopez da Cruz, probably for his recent attempt to hold 'secret meetings' with Indonesian officials."

August 25: The diplomatic soft soap begins. "Anticipating that intervention without Lisbon's approval may prove necessary, Soeharto is instructing Indonesian diplomats to make sure their host governments fully understand Jakarta's position.

"The diplomats are to brief their counterparts on the deteriorating situation in Timor and to express Jakarta's concern that it may pose a security threat to Indonesia. They are also to stress that Indonesia has no territorial ambitions but wants only a smooth decolonisation of Portuguese Timor."

August 26: Indonesian efforts to intervene are now transparent. "President Soeharto apparently hopes that Lisbon will give an internationally acceptable justification for military intervention in Timor by requesting Indonesian assistance in restoring order.

"The Portuguese, however, have thus far limited their calls for international assistance in Timor to humanitarian aid in evacuating refugees. A Portuguese special envoy to the UN has suggested possible political intervention by a UN goodwill mission that would include both Indonesia and Australia, but the speed with which the situation in Timor is deteriorating probably rules out a timely UN response to any of Lisbon's requests.

"Jakarta issued a public statement yesterday that was a transparent effort to pressure Lisbon into acquiescing in Indonesian military action. The government spokesman said that Indonesia is prepared to render humanitarian assistance, but believes this task cannot be separated from the more general problem of restoring security and order."

August 27: The lack of good CIA assets on the ground in Timor is tacitly admitted. "Information about events in Timor is poor and often contradictory. The Portuguese have informed US officials that they are on the verge of asking Indonesia to intervene militarily in Timor. Jakarta reportedly has told the Portuguese that it would intervene only if it had full freedom of action. Portugal will probably acquiesce to this condition. A green light from Lisbon would provide Jakarta with the international justification it has been seeking and remove the last obstacle to a military operation.

"Lisbon announced early today that it had evacuated all Portuguese refugees in Dili, including the governor of Timor and about 100 military personnel, to the island of Atauro, some 10 miles away. Two Indonesian destroyer escorts, formerly US ships, that were dispatched to evacuate the Indonesian consul and staff from Dili have now entered the city's harbour. On August 26, three Riga-class destroyer escorts carrying a marine assault force were ordered to depart Java for an unidentified exercise area.

"The inclusion of the ex-US escorts in the exercise directives for the Rigas suggests that the two naval movements are connected and that the exercise may be a cover for forward staging of warships near Timor.

"Lisbon has been trying to persuade Jakarta and Canberra to participate in a joint undertaking to resolve the situation, but the Australians have consistently refused to become involved more than in humanitarian assistance. Yesterday, the Australians reportedly turned down a Portuguese request to intervene militarily.

"In Dili, fighting is continuing, with the pro-Marxist groups apparently making inroads into areas previously controlled by the Timor Democratic Union. According to a Lisbon communique, the leftists, apparently augmented by defecting indigenous troops, now dominate the eastern part of the city, with Union forces controlling the western half. Strengths of the opposing forces are unknown, but reportedly over half the 3,000 Timorese troops, including most senior non-commissioned officers, have sided with the Marxists."

August 28: The predicted Portuguese request fails to materialise. Soeharto is said to draw support from Whitlam's attitude:

"Indonesia's preparations for intervention have probably advanced too far for Jakarta to turn back now, even though Portuguese President Costa Gomes has reportedly decided against endorsing unilateral Indonesian military action to restore order.

"Indonesian President Soeharto believes Jakarta must move carefully to avoid being accused of aggression against Timor. He undoubtedly hoped that a special Portuguese envoy scheduled to arrive in Jakarta last night would bring word that Lisbon was prepared to support publicly an Indonesian move. Costa Gomes has apparently decided that, for domestic political reasons, he cannot do so.

"Soeharto will probably give the go-ahead for intervention anyway and may well announce his decision in such a way as to leave the impression that he is acting on behalf of Lisbon.

"Recent world-wide publicity about the deteriorating situation in Timor and the Portuguese admission that they have lost control will work to Jakarta's advantage. Unilateral Indonesian action undertaken now in the name of ending bloodshed and with the appropriate disclaimers about territorial ambitions will probably not draw sharp international criticism."

On the same day the State Department reported on what it called Soeharto's "mystical" confidence, reinforced by Whitlam's attitude.

"Embassy Jakarta's sources report that open battle continues in Dili. At present:

- "Much of the violence seems to follow clan and family lines rather than political party divisions.
- "An Indonesian destroyer escort with orders to shoot if fired upon has arrived to participate in the refugee evacuation. (Other Indonesian vessels are on the way.)

"Embassy contacts agree that Soeharto is "mystically" sure Timor will eventually become Indonesian. Thus, drawing support from [Prime Minister] Whitlam's declaration of Australian non-intervention, he awaits a specific Portuguese request for him to take action."

August 29: "Indonesia's preparations for an invasion, originaly discussed by Soeharto and his military commanders on August 8, now are expected to be complete by August 31. The plan calls for a three-pronged attack on the north coast of the island.

"Two battalions are to launch a combined assault against Dili. The largest force of some 6,000 infantry will land at Atapupu in Indonesian Timor and then drive north into the Portuguese half of the island. One battalion will also land to secure the coastal strip extending eastward from Dili to Tutuala, on the eastern tip of the island. The forces then are to link up and secure control of the complete northern coast from Atapupu to Tutuala.

"The Indonesians expect some stiff resistance, but are confident they will be successful. Once the north coast of the island is secured, the Indonesians plan to withdraw most of their regular forces. They also plan to leave commando units and units of ethnic Timorese to establish control over the central part of the island to contend with any guerilla units that may be operating there."

On the same day the Weekly Review reported under the heading "Timor: Up For Adoption" that "Lisbon has all but washed its hands of Timor. Admitting that the situation is totally out of control, the Portguese have evacuated all their military and civilian personnel from the island and called for international humanitarian aid."

August 30: The DIA reported: "Lisbon has balked at signing a tentative agreement with Jakarta that would have sent Indonesian forces into Timor to restore order. Portuguese concurrence would have provided Jakarta with the cloak of legitimacy it has been seeking for its imminent military move.

"According to a reliable source, agreement was reached yesterday between Portuguese special envoy Almeida Santos and Indonesia's acting foreign minister, but Lisbon refused to approve the Santos draft. Lisbon said that it could not allow Indonesia to be the only country involved in a military operation.

"This appears to be another Portuguese attempt to apply pressure on the Australians to participate in a joint military operation with the Indonesians. Santos is leaving Jakarta today for Australia without having seen President Soeharto. The Australians, however, have consistently maintained they do not want to become involved beyond rendering humanitarian assistance, and it is unlikely they will respond positively to this pressure.

"The cease-fire arranged by Indonesia to cover the refugee evacuation evidently broke down when Portuguese authorities ordered the Indonesian warship in Dili harbour to depart on August 28.

"In Dili, the pro-Indonesian Apodeti group has allied with the leftist Fretilin to secure arms and to accelerate the eclipse of the Timor Democratic Union. Union forces reportedly abandoned Dili on August 29 under pressure from the combined Apodeti and Fretilin forces, said to number about 1,500. Jakarta apparently directed its sympathisers to co-operate with the leftists to ensure their involvement in any subsequent discussions and probably their survival in the civil war.

"Authorities on the Indonesian warship, now just outside the port, estimate that the alliance of convenience between Apodeti and Fretilin will disintegrate soon and that the ship must remain in sight to bolster Apodeti resolve. Union forces reportedly still control some important towns in the interior."

September 2: Australian intervention is still sought: "President Soeharto has not yet authorised an invasion pending the outcome of the current round of negotiations by Portuguese special envoy Almeida Santos.

"Santos was in Jakarta last week and has just finished talks with Australian Prime Minister Whitlam in Canberra.

"Santos evidently is seeking agreement for a multilateral peace-keeping attempt that would include Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Portugal.

"Malaysia has indicated that it would be willing to join such an effort. Australian spokesmen have left open the possibility that Canberra might contribute to an international effort.

"Whitlam had formerly opposed direct Australian involvement, but he is being criticised by members of his own as well as the opposition party for his indifferent attitude on the Timor problem.

"The possibility that a multilateral effort may be organised has strengthened Soeharto's hand against some of his military advisers who have been advocating immediate unilateral action.

"There is some evidence that Jakarta's clandestine political activities inside Timor may be bearing fruit."

Continued on page 36

Although special forces units have been carrying out reconnaissance missions on Timor since last year, Jakarta is now sending guerilla units into the Portuguese half of the island in order to engage Fretilin forces, encourage pro-Indonesian elements, and provoke incidents that would provide the Indonesians an excuse to invade should they decide to do so.

Continued from page 35

On the same day the DIA reported: "According to Indonesian intelligence officials, Fretilin now controls the Dili area and parts of the interior. In discussions with Indonesian officers over the weekend, Union leaders, admitting that their forces are outnumbered and outgunned by Fretilin, requested Indonesian help in securing additional arms and ammunition and in airlifting ammunition between their strongholds. The Union leaders reportedly are willing to consider integration with Indonesia, if approved by the Timorese, once Fretilin is defeated. One leader has drawn up a proclamation of merger for his region.

"The Indonesians are dealing cautiously with the Union leaders, advising them to merge with pro-Indonesian groups. The Indonesians apparently continue to count on covert operations to help justify intervention and are endeavouring to exploit the Union's overtures for this purpose.

"Following fruitless talks in Jakarta on August 29 and 30, Portuguese special envoy Almeida Santos arrived in Canberra yesterday for talks with Prime Minister Whitlam. The Australian Government said that it would decide whether to become actively involved in the Timor problem after Santos completes planned trips to Timor and again to Indonesia later this week.

"A message from the Indonesian 'Joint Exercise Command' requesting intelligence data on Portuguese Timor leave little doubt that the so-called joint exercise is a cover for invasion preparations."

September 4: The State Department reported, "Communications intelligence indicates that two Indonesian special forces groups, consisting of about 100 men each, may have entered Portuguese Timor on the evening of September 3-4."

September 5: The Weekly Review, under the heading "Timor: Dynamic Inaction" outlined the fears of President Gomes which were to prove only too true: "For domestic political reasons, Lisbon does not believe it can publicly sanction unilateral Indonesian intervention. Portuguese President Costa Gomes evidently fears that Jakarta will be too heavy-handed in dealing with Timorese dissidents and increase rather than end the bloodshed.

"During discussions in Jakarta last week, Santos and the Indonesians worked out a proposal for a four-party peacekeeping effort. Indonesia under the general guidance of the others (Australia, Malaysia and Portugal) would send in forces to restore order. The four powers would then jointly supervise the peace and guide the decolonization process in accord with the arrangements worked out in Macao last June. Lisbon's initial reaction to the proposal was negative; President Costa Gomes probably wants firmer guarantees that Jakarta will not deal too roughly with the Timorese."

September 8: Soeharto was worried (unnecessarily) that an invasion might cause Australia to exercise the leverage given by its military aid to Indonesia:

"Indonesian President Soeharto's vacillation in recent weeks on how to handle Portuguese Timor reflects the disagreement among his advisers on how to deal with the situation.

"Soeharto would prefer to avoid unilateral military action in Timor, but if he cannot show that Indonesia's interests will be protected by other means the pressure from his military commanders for armed intervention will be difficult to resist.

"Minister of Defence General Paggabean and Indonesia's top military commanders favoured unilateral intervention in Portuguese Timor long before the coup attempt in Dili last month plunged the territory into civil war. They have argued that Indonesia cannot afford to take the chance that an unstable or communist regime may emerge in Timor.

"General Ali Murtopo, Soeharto's long-time confidante and adviser, has been in charge of the diplomatic effort in Timor. For him, military action would be tantamount to a vote of no confidence in his ability. Murtopo and the special operations staff of the national intelligence agency have also been operating a major clandestine effort inside Portuguese Timor.

"Murtopo's group has organised and provided funds for the pro-Indonesia Apodeti Party and has provided training and weapons for Timorese guerillas. The chaotic situation in Timor, in which ideological considerations have taken a back seat to clan and tribal rivalries, is tailor-made for such clandestine operations.

"Foreign Minister Adam Malik and his colleagues in the diplomatic corps are worried about the international consequences of whatever action Indonesia takes in Timor. Malik has been working hard to repair Jakarta's frayed non-aligned image and fears that a move against Timor now when the leftist are in control would reopen Indonesia to charges of being anti-communist and pro-West.

"President Soeharto himself is ambivalent. Personally he would probably prefer military action because he has an overwhelming fear of communist subversion in Indonesia. He is also concerned about his international image, however, and does not want to revive the ghost of adventurist foreign policies practised under former President Sukarno.

Jose Martins poses outside the UDT (Timor Democratic Union) camp at Motaain, near Balibo, in September 1975.

"Soeharto is also concerned about the impact on Indonesia's bilateral relations with Australia and the US. In both cases he is worried about the loss of military assistance, which he badly wants to improve Indonesia's outdated equipment.

"Soeharto has apparently relied heavily on this argument in counselling caution to his military commanders and is now showing some concern that if substantial aid is not forthcoming there will be severe political repercussions for himself.

"In trying to balance off his various advisers, Soeharto has appeared to blow hot and cold on Timor. When meeting with military advisers he has emphasised his willingness to authorise an invasion should Indonesian security require it. In meetings with his political and diplomatic advisers he has stressed the need to get a new agreement with Lisbon that will settle the Timor problem.

"Soeharto's political position ultimately depends on support from his military commanders. Indonesian military preparations for invading Timor have taken on a life of their own, and it will be harder and harder to reverse gears. The diplomatic and clandestine political options, although showing some promise of success, will take time and there is little certainty of the final result.

"Soeharto professes to have mystical assurance that Timor will eventually become part of Indonesia regardless of what Jakarta does and therefore patience is all that is needed. Unless either Malik or Murtopo can soon show some clear proof that their methods will succeed, however, Soeharto will probably find that for political reasons he can no longer keep saying no to his military commanders."

September 10: The DIA reported: "The left-wing Revolutionary Front for the Independence of Timor (Fretilin) on September 8 announced victory in the month-long strife. Although some resistance by the Timor Democratic Union continues, serious fighting between the factions has evidently ended.

"Meanwhile, the leftists have publicly abandoned their demand for immediate independence and are calling for a gradual decolonisation program similar to the one announced by Portugal in June."

September 13: The DIA reports that operations by Indonesian special forces could lead to renewed fighting: "The crisis in Portuguese Timor seems likely to remain in the diplomatic arena despite intensified Indonesian special forces operations.

"Lisbon is trying to steer the parties back to the gradual decolonisation scheme reached in Macao in June. Following informal meetings with Portugal's special envoy in Jakarta on September 11, Indonesia announced its agreement in principle to negotiations between the Portuguese and the three Timorese factions, to begin September 20 in Macao.

"Meanwhile an Indonesian press report says that western districts of the territory have proclaimed merger with Indonesia. This is the area where Indonesian special forces are taking control of towns wns with the intent of handing them over to Indonesian-trained Timorese refugees. Further operations of this kind could lead to renewed fighting in the interior."

September 17: The State Department reported "Indonesian intelligence, according to a reliable clandestine source, has trained, organised and covertly committed 650 Timorese irregular troops into Portuguese Timor to stem the advance of the pro-independence Fretilin forces."

September 18: Indonesian special forces are engaged in heavy fighting: "Indonesia continues to follow a two-track approach toward the Timor problem. Publicly, Jakarta denies any intention of unilateral intervention and calls on Lisbon to move faster in arranging talks between the Timorese parties. Privately, Jakarta has stepped up covert military operations inside Timor, including use of Indonesian special forces units to support pro-Indonesian Timorese.

"Indonesian special forces units operating covertly in Portuguese Timor are meeting unexpected resistance in several areas, according to intercepted communications. A combined force of at least 200 special forces troops and Indonesian-trained Timorese guerillas crossed the border in early September and split into a number of teams.

"One team reportedly overran Fatu Besi, some 25 miles inside the border, and pushed north toward Alfu. Two days ago troops at Fatu Besi were attacked. Other teams were sent to attack Ermera and Bobonaro, where they are meeting stiff resistance from Fretilin forces.

"President Soeharto continues to look for a legal justification for an Indonesian military invasion. Last week, he instructed his Minister of Justice to come up with a plan to integrate Timor by military means but still avoid an accusation that Indonesia is expansionist."

September 19: The Weekly Review gives more on Indonesian provocation: "Although special forces units have been carrying out reconnaissance missions on Timor since last year, Jakarta is now sending guerilla units into the Portuguese half of the island in order to engage Fretilin forces, encourage pro-Indonesian elements, and provoke incidents that would provide the Indonesians an excuse to invade should they decide to do so."

On the same day the DIA Weekly Summary reported, "Fighting continues despite the fall of the island to the Marxist Fretilin party, primarily because of increased Indonesian covert military action in the interior of Timor. In addition to this clandestine campaign, Indonesian President Soeharto is pursuing diplomatic and propaganda policies designed to set the stage for eventual Indonesian annexation.

"The civil war, prompted by the August 9 power bid by the moderate Timor Democratic Union (UDT) and subsequent violent reaction of the Fretilin party, has caused hundreds of deaths and many thousands of refugees.

"On September 8, a Fretilin victory statement announced a willingness to drop the party's former demand for immediate sovereignty over Timor. This apparent policy switch probably resulted from Fretilin's fear of Indonesian intervention, knowledge of that government's growing covert activities, and Timor's need for outside humanitarian assistance for the devastated island."

September 22: The State Department reported, "In a September 22 intercepted message, the Indonesian Ambassador in Canberra reports that Fretilin leader Ramos Horta has cabled him that:

- "Moderates within Fretilin have consolidated power and are now willing to co-operate with Indonesia.
- "Fretilin has proposed to the Portuguese that a joint peace force composed of East Timorese and Indonesian troops be stationed along the Timor/Indonesian border.
- "Border incidents involving Indonesian troops or rebel infiltration from West Timor would jeopardise the moderates' peace efforts."

September 26: Malaysia agrees to secretly supply weapons for the Indonesian special forces: "Clandestine intervention by Indonesian troops on behalf of pro-Indonesian forces in the territory has run into serious setbacks. Pro-Indonesia Timorese have proved to be too few, too poorly armed and too badly trained to offer a serious challenge to the Fretilin forces. They have not been able to defend positions once the Indonesian troops have been withdrawn.

"Vastly increased Indonesian involvement is now proposed; special forces troops armed with weapons that cannot be traced to Jakarta will be used. Malaysia has reportedly agreed in principle to supply such weapons.

"Recent press reports from Jakarta that claim Fretilin forces crossed the border and attacked Indonesian Timor may have been released by military officers in an effort to build up the pressure on Soeharto."

On the same day the National Intelligence Bulletin added that Indonesian soldiers had been captured, but with little international reaction: "Indonesian special forces have taken casualties in recent fighting in Portuguese Timor where they are assisting pro-Indonesian Timorese against the radical Fretilin forces that now control most important towns. Some Indonesian soldiers have been captured, but Fretilin efforts to stir up an international outcry by publicising Jakarta's involvement have evoked little response."

NEXT WEEK: In Part Two The National Times provides extensive documentation in an incisive account of the invasion itself. The revelations are certain to force a crucial reinterpretation of our regional history.

FURTHER READING: Two books by George Munster and Richard Walsh throw further light on Australian classified documents relating to Timor: *Documents on Australian Defence and Foreign Policy 1968-79* (now banned) and *Secrets of State*. Also The National Times on March 15, 1981, carried an exclusive account of the Hope Royal Commission's report on Australian spying in Timor.

CIDAC Centro de Documentação

A SPECIAL LIFT-OUT REPORT

Fretilin soldiers comfort a wounded comrade during the invasion the world largely ignored.

THE TIMOR PAPERS

PART TWO

PART TWO of The National Times series on Timor has added relevance as its publication coincides with border crossings by Indonesian troops into Papua New Guinea.

Last week in Part One, Dale Van Atta* and Brian Toohey drew on highly classified US documents to reveal how Indonesia had conducted a year-long clandesdine war against its tiny neighbour before resorting to outright invasion in December 1975.

One purpose of the clandestine war was to create the very sort of chaos that Indonesia eventually tried to use to justify its invasion.

In contrast to the present opposition to Argentine aggression in the Falklands, the international community ignored Indonesia's use of force.

Indeed, as was reported on page two of The National Times last week, the British in 1975 quietly encouraged the Indonesian aggression against Timor.

This week's material, which deals with the actual invasion, is drawn primarily from the Central Intelligence Agency, its military counterpart the Defence Intelligence Agency, the State Department, and the code-breaking specialists at the National Security Agency.

Unless otherwise stated the documentary extracts printed here come from the National Intelligence Daily.

The Daily was a small "newspaper" published by the Director of the CIA for an elite, specially cleared audience in Washington. It was ready for the President's desk early each morning in 1975.

The documents reveal conclusively that the US Government knew about Indonesia's clandestine war and had many months warning of the invasion plans.

Under intelligence sharing arrangements with Australia, a large part of this information was passed on to Canberra.

The information included assessments that Indonesia was highly sensitive to any US or Australian disapproval of its behaviour towards Timor. However, this leverage was never utilised to restrain the Indonesians from engaging in a war in which tens of thousands of Timorese lost their lives.

An example of how the CIA's Intelligence Daily of August 29, 1975, gave early warning of the Indonesian invasion.

One of the most striking features of this week's revelations is the analysis done for the then US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, of where US interests lay in regard to Timor.

The fate of the Timorese people was at no stage mentioned in the analysis, nor were such concepts as the right to self-determination or freedom from aggression.

The documents also show that the Indonesian determination to cover up its behaviour in Timor encompassed serious planning to sink a frigite carrying a UN envoy to the island.

The series, which concludes this week, has been printed in lift-out format to enable readers to keep this significant insight into one of the saddest wars in modern history.

*DALE VAN ATTA is a reporter on the staff of the Washington columnist Jack Anderson, specialising in security affairs.

September 29: Indonesian officers have reported that many of the refugees who fled to Indonesian Timor are beginning to grumble about conditions in Indonesia and many of the able-bodied men are returning to join Fretilin.

October 3: The Weekly Review reported that Fretilin had the upper hand: "The new Portuguese Government says it is ready for talks that would lead to an incorporation of Timor into Indonesia, and President Soeharto has again agreed to sound out the Portuguese.

"The Fretilin party, whose forces now control most of Portuguese Timor, is adamantly opposed to even participating in any talks that include its local rivals. Fretilin asserts that its de facto control of the territory entitles it to represent all Timorese in any discussions about the territory's future.

"The pro-Indonesia forces, even with the aid of Indonesian special forces units, apparently have been no match for Fretilin's troops. For the short term, Fretilin has the upper hand and may soon decide to announce Portuguese Timor's independence."

October 8: The State Department reported, "Jakarta has denied wire service reports that Indonesian forces launched a large-scale attack early today on the town of Batugade, two kilometres inside Timorese territory. Previous communications intelligence indicated that Jakarta was preparing to "confront" Portuguese Timor on the 7th or 8th."

October 10: The Weekly Review rebuts the Indonesian denial of the attack: "President Soeharto has ordered the reinforcement of positions along the Portuguese Timor border, following reversals last week at the hands of Fretilin troops. Early in the week, Fretilin forces pushed Indonesian special forces troops out of Batugade, the last Indonesian stronghold on the Portuguese side of the border, and reportedly crossed the border to attack a refugee training camp at Mataain and another position 10 miles from the border.

"Although President Soeharto has ruled against a full-scale invasion of Fretilin-held territory, he has ordered troops patrolling the border to pursue any Fretilin forces that intrude into Indonesian territory back into Portuguese Timor. Late last week after several border clashes, Indonesian troops launched an attack against Fretilin positions close to the border. On October 7, a force of 100 special forces troops and Indonesian supporters retook Batugade, forcing Fretilin defenders to withdraw toward Balibo.

"The troops for this attack may have come from an amphibious task force which ferried some 400 marines and other troops and vehicles to Atapupu on October 2; two companies of the marines were moved immediately to reinforce positions near the border. According to a clandestine source, Malaysia provided Indonesia in early October with a small quantity of arms and ammunition

Continued on page 16

Reprinted by Tapol, 8a Treport St., London, SW18 2BP With the permission of the National Times

Continued from page 15

that cannot be traced to any foreign military assistance given to Indonesia."

October 11: Indonesian forces are to attack a Timor town wearing uniforms without insignia: "President Soeharto continues to hold out against pressure from his armed forces commanders for a military invasion of Portuguese Timor. He has, however, approved a plan of action that will increase military pressure on Fretilin forces operating near the border.

"The plan calls for the setting up of small military bases just inside Portuguese Timor. Indonesia's strategy is to nibble away at the Fretilin from these enclaves.

"The first of the enclaves is to be established on October 14, when Indonesian units are to attack the town of Maliana. The troops participating in the operation will wear uniforms without insignia and are to carry older, Soviet-made weapons so as not to be identified as Indonesian regulars."

October 17: The DIA reported, "Fretilin authorities in Dili have announced that Indonesian forces attacked six towns along the Portuguese Timor border yesterday. The attacks reportedly were supported by artillery and mortars.

"Fretilin claims that the attacks were repulsed, but an intercepted Indonesian message said that a seventh town was captured.

"All Indonesian forces in the area were recently subordinated to a Joint Task Force Command, and the 'exercise' cover for the buildup has been abandoned."

October 18: Fretilin are putting up a stiffer fight than expected: "Indonesian troops attacking into Portuguese Timor have succeeded in occupying five border towns, but have bogged down in some areas after three days of fighting. Fretilin forces are putting up stiff resistance in places, according to intercepted messages, and some Indonesian units may be pulling back to their side of the border.

"One Indonesian unit is apparently surrounded and taking casualties. The commander of the force has asked for reinforcements and a helicopter gunship to provide air support and to evacuate wounded. Other units are reporting extreme shortages of ammunition and supplies. Indonesian field commanders apparently have underestimated Fretilin strength and their own logistical problems."

October 20: Indonesia's poor munitions -- 70 per cent of its mortar rounds were duds: The DIA reported, "The Indonesian military operation into Portuguese Timor has been temporarily blunted by surprisingly strong Fretilin resistance, by the poor condition of Indonesian war materiel, and by the effects of the wet season on transportation.

"The drive into Timor by an Indonesian reinforced infantry battalion resulted initially in some territorial gains in the northern part of the island, but it has stalled because of Jakarta's failure to secure the border town of Lebos. Indonesian troops are receiving heavy mortar attacks, one of which severely damaged their forward command post over the weekend.

"Indonesian commanders are continuing to complain about the poor quality of their supporting fire. An intercepted message, for example, revealed that 70 per cent of the Indonesian mortar rounds were duds.

"The Indonesian high command has approved the commitment of another infantry battalion, but it will be several days before that battalion, presently on Java, can reach the battle area. The navy can be expected to increase its fire support in an attempt to repel increasingly strong Fretilin counterattacks against Indonesian troops on the northern shore.

"Meanwhile, the loose naval blockade around the island should soon begin to have an effect on the Timorese, who are heavily dependent on the importation of food, fuel, and military supplies."

October 22: The DIA reported, "The Indonesian air force has conducted its first confirmed air strike against targets inside Portuguese Timor. On October 20, a light bomber attacked Fretilin positions around Atabai, 10 miles inside the border. Another light bomber will arrive in the area in 10 days; a C-47 gunship is already there."

October 24: "The Indonesian military operation launched last week in Portuguese Timor has bogged down. Field commanders apparently underestimated their logistic problems and the strength of Fretilin forces operating near the border.

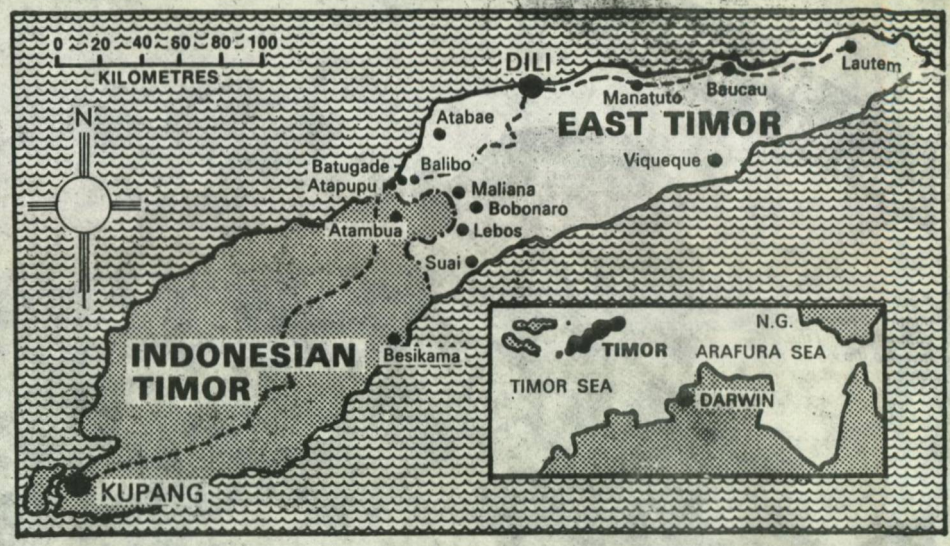
"By early last week, Indonesia had massed about 3500 troops along the border. Some 1500 -- supported at times by a B-26 bomber, a C-47 gunship, and a few armed helicopters -- attacked a number of Fretilin-held towns, five of which were captured after three days of fighting. Counterattacking Fretilin forces, however, forced some Indonesian units to pull back to their side of the border.

"Fretilin forces are sustaining heavy losses and have reverted to hit-and-run tactics, reportedly attacking an Indonesian supply line between Balibo and Maliana."

October 28: The Indonesian attacks step up but they still deny it is an invasion: "The Fretilin counterattack on October 23 was beaten back by Indonesian heavy weapons fire, possibly including PT-76 tanks committed earlier in the week. Indonesian communication intercepts indicate that Fretilin is being troubled with undisciplined personnel and a lack of trained heavy weapons personnel.

"A second infantry battalion from Java has been dispatched to Timor. Jakarta has consistently underestimated the strength of the Timorese leftists, and further reinforcements may be necessary.

"Indonesia is continuing to deny invasion, but the continued flow of reinforcements implies that military pressure will increase until a bid for integration from the Indonesian-backed Timorese factions can be used to justify unification with Indonesia."



> *Some 2000 Indonesian regular troops, special forces, marines Timorese partisans, launched co-ordinated attacks along the border... Despite increasingly visible military activities, Jakarta continues to deny its involvement and attributes all fighting to anti-Fretilin Timorese.*

OLIVER STREWE

October 31: The DIA Weekly summary left no doubt that Indonesia was committing military aggression, even if it was largely ignored by the Western media: "Some 2000 Indonesian regular infantry troops, special forces, marines, and Timorese partisans, launched co-ordinated attacks along the border and captured at least six border towns in Portuguese Timor on October 16. Fretilin defences quickly stiffened. Indonesian units came under strong counterattacks, and a company was apparently forced back across the border at Lebos.

"Despite increasingly visible military activities, Jakarta continues to deny its involvement and attributes all fighting to anti-Fretilin Timorese. President Soeharto remains concerned about international reaction and continues to make an effort to deny any territorial ambitions."

November 6: The DIA reported, "The Indonesian combined task force commander, who has gradually overcome earlier logistic difficulties, plans to establish a supply base in Indonesian Timor in anticipation of heavier fighting and a lengthy military campaign.

"He has requested provisions and ammunition for a force of 13,000 allied Timorese partisans and Indonesian troops for a two- to three-month operation.

"Meanwhile, according to Indonesian intelligence sources, Fretilin's forces have finally acknowledged in their communications that Maliana has fallen, opening the way for the Indonesians to the key town of Bobonaro."

November 7: The Weekly Review under the heading "Timor Going Through The Motions" reported: "Talks between Indonesia and Portugal last weekend in Rome resulted in little more than another pledge by Lisbon to do what it can to secure a cease-fire between the local forces now struggling for control of Portuguese Timor. Lisbon can probably do very little. Jakarta concluded weeks ago that a Portuguese request for Indonesian "assistance" in restoring law and order to the colony would not be forthcoming, and that the Portuguese have neither the inclination nor ability to reassert their own authority in the colony.

"Indonesia has had increasing difficulty in maintaining a low profile on Timor as its limited military intervention there has expanded. Recently, Portugal compounded Jakarta's image problem by announcing that it had asked Jakarta to withdraw its forces from the Timor border area and nearby waters. The Australian Government last week also added to Jakarta's problems by publicly criticising for the first time Indonesia's military intervention in Timor.

"Indonesian forces now control most of the border area and at least five towns inside Portuguese Timor, and they are attempting to consolidate their positions.

November 26: "Indonesia last weekend began the second phase of its limited military campaign in Portuguese Timor.

"After nearly five weeks of inactivity because of heavy rains Indonesian air and naval units began bombarding several towns on the Portuguese half of the island. Ground forces simultaneously launched attacks and reportedly have captured Fatularan, about five miles south of Atabae which is still in Fretilin hands.

"Indonesian marines have landed near Tailaco, according to Fretilin messages, and are possibly planning to join the troops from Fatularan in a move against the city."

November 28: The State Department reported: "In a bid for Brazilian support, a Fretilin spokesman has told the Brazilian ambassador in Canberra that the Fretilin believed Indonesia planned to attack Portuguese Timor on November 29 and hoped to occupy the colony by December 2, according to a November 21 intercepted message. The spokesman also stated that whether there is an attack or not, his organisation will declare independence unilaterally on December 1."

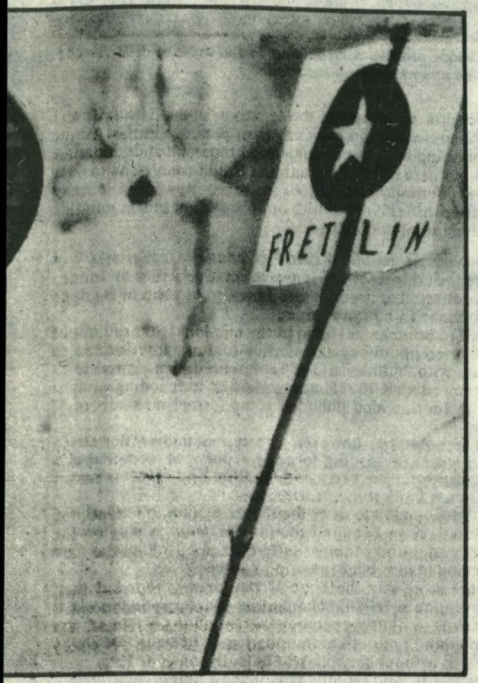
November 29: "The declaration of independence for Portuguese Timor issued yesterday by the left-wing Fretilin group appears to be a desperate Fretilin effort to protect itself from Indonesian military operations.

"Fretilin probably hopes to deter an Indonesian advance toward the capital city of Dili by focusing greater international attention on the Timor problem. The group may hope that the publicity shortly before President Ford's visit to Indonesia on December 5 will inhibit the Indonesians.

"Fretilin representatives in Australia have been lobbying among embassies in Canberra for several days for support against an anticipated Indonesian military push toward Dili. They claim Jakarta has notified Canberra that it will no longer be able to guarantee the safety of Australians engaged in relief activities in Portuguese Timor."

Also on the 29th, the State Department reported, "Acting in response to the unilateral declaration of independence by Fretilin earlier this week, four pro-Indonesian political groups on November 29 issued a statement, through the Indonesian foreign ministry, declaring Portuguese Timor to be a part of Indonesia.

CIA's headlines for some of its reporting on Timor in the National Intelligence Daily became so detached as to reach the point of cynicism.



Earlier in the day the Indonesian Government had declared that Fretilin's action contravened its earlier promises to respect the principle of self-determination.

"Meanwhile, the Portuguese Government publicly rejected attempts by the rival political groups either to proclaim the territory's independence or its integration into Indonesia.

"President Suharto plans to discuss anticipated reduction in US aid during President Ford's December 5-6 visit, according to a reliable source."

December 1: The State Department reported President Ford's visit played a part in the timing of a full-scale invasion: "According to a reliable source, Indonesia will not initiate large-scale military action against Portuguese Timor until after President Ford completes his visit December 7, despite Fretilin's unilateral declaration of independence. No judgment has yet been reached on the use of force after December 7, but the matter is under consideration and the decision will be influenced greatly by Jakarta's determination of whether Portugal colluded with Fretilin over the independence announcement. Should an invasion be decided upon, the Indonesians estimate that Fretilin can be forced to capitulate in three to four weeks."

Most countries probably prefer not to have to stand up and be counted on the Timor issue. Whether Indonesia's opponents will be able to do more than cause Jakarta a temporary embarrassment will probably depend on how quickly Indonesian troops can restore law and order and create a stable administration in eastern Timor.

US interests in Timor relate solely to our broader interests with respect to the principal parties involved – Portugal, Indonesia, Australia and Indonesia's ASEAN neighbours... US interests at this time would appear to be best served by following Indonesia's lead on the issue while remaining responsive and receptive to Australian and Portuguese views if pressed on us.

December 2: "Since the Fretilin declaration (of independence) Indonesian military commanders on Timor have been instructed to step up military operations against Fretilin and have been advised they need no longer worry about hiding Indonesian involvement.

"According to intercepted communications, Indonesian air and naval units have been ordered to stop any ship or aircraft leaving or entering Portuguese Timor except Australian craft.

"Fretilin's bid for international support has fallen on deaf ears. Australia and Portugal have publicly rejected the independence declaration and so far no foreign government has recognised Fretilin as an independent government on Timor. Some foreign Portuguese colonies may recognise the new State and some of the more radical members of the Third World may also decide to side with Fretilin because they dislike the Soeharto government."

December 3: The State Department reports, "Soeharto has approved the idea of full-scale intervention, but is skeptical about the tactical plans provided by the military and had not given final approval as of December 2 for the invasion.

"The government is somewhat concerned about international reactions to timing such a move for soon after President Ford's visit, but considers that this will not present a serious problem since 'all the world knows that Indonesia has tried its best to solve the problem peaceably'."

December 5: "President Soeharto has reportedly approved a plan to begin overt Indonesian intervention in Portuguese Timor soon after President Ford leaves Jakarta.

"The first step will be an appeal for support from the pro-Indonesian faction in Timor, followed by an official announcement that Jakarta is sending military forces to stabilise the situation. Both moves are scheduled for today, the day President Ford arrives.

"The Indonesians issued a statement yesterday on their 'moral obligation to protect the people of Timor', a move that could presage the actions outlined in Soeharto's reported plan.

"A date for the overt intervention has not been set. It could take place as early as tomorrow, but it is more likely to come a few days later. Indonesian Defence Minister Punggabean was scheduled to visit Indonesian Timor yesterday undoubtedly to brief local commanders on the plan and to gain information that could affect its timing and execution.

"Soeharto's agreement to overt intervention ends his year-long resistance to arguments by his military advisers that only direct military invasion would assure the integration of Portuguese Timor into Indonesia. Fretilin's unilateral declaration of independence last Friday markedly changed the situation and Soeharto may have decided he had to move quickly before a Fretilin State gained international recognition.

"Soeharto undoubtedly calculates that the pro-Indonesian forces now control enough territory to give credibility to their appeal for Jakarta's support to undercut expected international criticism of Indonesian intervention.

"Soeharto is undoubtedly still concerned about the effects of an Indonesian invasion on his relations with the US, particularly the continuation of US military aid, and he will try hard to present a plausible justification. His military commanders may have worked out a battle plan that will not require the use of US-grant equipment in the final operation.

"Soeharto is certain to try to elicit a sympathetic attitude from President Ford during their meetings."

December 6: "The Indonesians will launch their invasion of Portuguese Timor on Sunday. According to one of Jakarta's plans Indonesian troops will withdraw once the Fretilin forces are broken, leaving pro-Indonesian troops to occupy the capital.

"Intercepted communications show that Fretilin is expecting the invasion. Fretilin leaders in Dili reportedly are building up defences near the capital and moving supplies and weapons to the interior to wage guerilla war against an Indonesian occupation."

December 7: The State Department listed US interests in the wake of the invasion. The lives of the Timorese people were at no stage mentioned: "As yet unconfirmed press reports from Portuguese Timor indicate Indonesian forces launched an attack early December 7 and have captured the colony's capital at Dili. The reports are consistent with previous intelligence estimates as well as Embassy Jakarta predictions. The invasion, following President Ford's visit, is likely to raise questions about the degree of US foreknowledge.

"Indonesia's intervention was probably designed to be 'surgical', but may prove more costly and difficult than Jakarta anticipates. An analysis of US interests sent to the Secretary [Kissinger] notes:

- "US interests in Timor relate solely to our broader interests with respect to the principal parties involved – Portugal, Indonesia, Australia and Indonesia's ASEAN neighbours.
- "The longer military intervention drags on and the less decisive it is, the more divisive the action will be in the international arena. The current co-operative stance of Portugal, Indonesia and Australia in co-sponsoring the UN resolution calling for a peaceful solution will be difficult to maintain.
- "Portugal could well condemn Indonesia's action and may take the matter to the Security Council.
- "Australia, only a week away from elections, is likely to be far more cautious but is unlikely to openly support Indonesia's move.
- "Other countries in the area will be embarrassed by the move but will not wish to stand up and be counted.

"US interests at this time would appear to be best served by following Indonesia's lead on the issue while remaining responsive and receptive to Australian and Portuguese views if pressed on us. Our efforts should be devoted to getting the three together to work out what is essentially their problem."

December 8: Dili falls: "Indonesian troops have captured Dili, the capital of Portuguese Timor. Yesterday marine and airborne troops equipped with US weapons mounted a full-scale attack against the city.

"The units met little resistance from Fretilin. Intercepted messages from Dili indicate that Fretilin leaders and their troops fled the city before the attack.

"Jakarta, meanwhile is attempting to portray its invasion in the best possible light. Foreign Minister Malik told reporters yesterday that Indonesian "volunteers" had landed in Timor only after Dili had fallen to indigenous anti-Fretilin forces and in response to a request from these forces for assistance. He denied that Indonesian forces were involved in any heavy fighting or that they had bombarded or carried out air attacks against Dili."

December 10: Selling an invasion: "Indonesia is having trouble convincing the world that military intervention in Timor is justified in part because of the unexpectedly strong reaction from Portugal itself.

"Lisbon has broken relations with Indonesia and the Portuguese Foreign Minister has branded Jakarta's actions an 'unqualified act of armed aggression'.

"He may have been speaking in part for domestic consumption but Portugal does want to remain on good terms with its former African colonies, especially Mozambique, which is in the forefront of those criticising Jakarta.

"Indonesia probably would like to follow the path in Timor that was followed in 1969 with th former Dutch territory of West New Guinea. West New Guinea was incorporated into Indonesia after an Indonesian-managed plebiscite held under UN auspices.

"To this end Jakarta is sponsoring a resolution in the UN decolonisation committee calling on the administering power in Timor to create conditions leading to self-determination for the Timorese people.

"Although the resolution was directed originally at the Portuguese as the responsible power in Timor, Jakarta evidently expects that once its own control is established, the UN committee will merely substitute Indonesia for Portugal.

"Most countries probably prefer not to have to stand up and be counted on the Timor issue. Whether Indonesia's opponents will be able to do more than cause Jakarta a temporary embarrassment will probably depend on how quickly Indonesian troops can restore law and order and create a stable administration in eastern Timor.

"The timetable for the military operation has apparently slipped somewhat, partly because of bad weather and partly because of command-and-control problems."

On the same day the State Department reported: "Analysing the weekend action, Embassy Jakarta points out, 'There is no doubt US Military Assistance Program equipment was used, and we could be in for part of the blame if the operation is not a quick success.'

"Ambassador's Comments: The Foreign Minister has already indicated to others the US understands and does not oppose Indonesia's action. I believe our best course is to take at face value Indonesia's professed desire for orderly self-determination. Indonesia probably would not resent a US vote at the UN for a ceasefire and an observed process of self-determination, but it certainly would resent US support for a return to the status quo ante."

December 11: "Indonesia's Asian friends are working to defuse criticism of Jakarta by other third-world States and work out a UN resolution on Timor that all sides can accept.

"Indonesia's partners in the Association of South-east Asian Nations – Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Thailand – have joined other Asian States at the UN in seeking a compromise resolution on Timor that will not condemn Indonesia for aggression.

"The Timor affair poses a particularly delicate problem for the Australian Government, which is in the midst of a bitter election campaign. Left-wing trade unionists

Continued on page 34

Continued from page 33

supporting the Fretilin party in Timor are being joined by usually conservative veterans who serve in Timor in World War II and feel an emotional tie to its people.

"Australia is presently supporting a compromise resolution that avoids mentioning the Indonesian invasion but calls for respecting the rights of Timorese self-determination. The Australians fear that the compromise in its present form has little chance for passage.

"Even Jakarta's severest critics do not believe that Fretilin can form a government worthy of substantial support.

"Intercepts indicate that Jakarta intends to step up its military campaign in all parts of Portuguese Timor. Indonesia now has well over 15,000 troops on the island."

December 12: The Weekly Review gave a succinct summary of world reaction: "Most members of the international community would probably prefer not to stand up and be counted on the Timor issue. Whether or not Indonesia's opponents will be able to do more than cause Jakarta temporary embarrassment will probably depend on how quickly Indonesian troops can restore law and order and create a stable administration in Timor."

December 15: Under the droll heading "Timor-Indonesia: Portugal Did It", the State Department said: "The Government of Indonesia issued a statement December 14 laying the blame for the crisis in Timor on Portugal. The statement claims:

- "The crisis is the result of actions taken by Portugal to maintain colonialism in a new form.
- "Portugal placed its colonial military force entirely at the disposal of Fretilin, which has used it to suppress popular opposition and violate Indonesian territory.
- "The request of supporters of the UN resolution on Timor to withdraw "Indonesian troops" has absolutely no basis in reality."

January 2: Peacock's attitude is resented: "International reaction to Indonesia's military actions in Portuguese Timor continues to be troublesome for Jakarta, but the government of President Soeharto is confident Timor is a manageable problem.

"For Indonesia, the Security Council resolution of December 22 was little more than a slap on the wrist, and the Indonesian ambassador at the UN indicated in advance that Jakarta could live with its working. Indonesia subsequently made a pro-forma statement regretting the UN action, but welcoming UN participation in settling the Timor problem.

"Jakarta is still taking a co-operative public position, while working behind the scenes to postpone the arrival of a fact-finding mission as called for in the resolution.

"Jakarta insists that all outside parties, including the UN, must work through the new provisional Timorese Government set up in Dili on December 19. That government has said publicly that UN representatives should not come to Timor until their physical safety can be guaranteed.

"Once Indonesian forces have full control over the handful of towns in eastern Timor, a UN team could be allowed to go through the motions of a fact-finding visit.

"The new regime in Dili has made a public appeal for Indonesian military, political and economic assistance, giving Jakarta a legal basis for admitting its role in Timor. Indonesia maintains that only "volunteers" are fighting in Timor.

"The most critical factor for Jakarta in limiting international interest in Timor is how fast Indonesian forces can suppress Fretilin. The longer the fighting continues, the greater the likelihood Fretilin leaders overseas will be able to attract support from third world countries. Thus far, few governments have paid more than lip service to Fretilin's cause, but this could change if Fretilin continued to fight.

"Although fairly relaxed about the reaction of its neighbours. President Soeharto was angered by Singapore's abstaining on the UN resolution. Indonesia's other partners in the Association of South-east Asian Nations voted against the resolution: Soeharto thought he had a personal assurance from Singapore Prime Minister Lee that he would support Indonesia on Timor.

"Soeharto reportedly will retaliate by postponing appointment of a new ambassador, by suspending intelligence exchanges and by closing Indonesian airspace to Singapore military aircraft that do not have prior written permission. Jakarta attaches great importance to improving regional co-operation, however, and these measures will probably be temporary.

"Indonesia was willing to overlook Australia's unfavourable General Assembly vote, believing it was directed at a domestic audience during an election campaign. This Indonesian forebearance could change, however, as Jakarta is certain to resent Foreign Minister Peacock's continuing strong statements against Indonesian actions on Timor.

"Australian public opinion is pushing the government toward a stronger public stance, but the new Fraser Government doubtless will work privately to minimise strains with Indonesia.".

January 13: Stage-managing the UN visit: "Jakarta is preparing carefully for the arrival of a UN fact-finding mission to Timor early next week. The Indonesians want to ensure that Secretary-General Waldheim's representative submits a favourable report.

"Efforts are reportedly under way to conceal the presence of Indonesian troops and heavy equipment and to repair war damage to Dili. Reports say that the UN mission will be allowed to visit only Dili and other towns securely under Indonesian control, and formal contact will be allowed only with the carefully coached pro-Indonesian regime in Dili.

"The Indonesians should be able to run the visit as they wish, although Fretilin does have a capacity to stage embarrassing incidents.

"The most significant towns are already under the control of Indonesian forces, and Jakarta should be able to occupy the remaining populated areas in a few weeks. Fretilin forces, however, reportedly have enough supplies to continue fighting a guerilla war for at least a year.

"Since the Indonesian intervention on December 7, Fretilin has carefully avoided engagements with major Indonesian units. Instead it has used hit-and-run attacks from mountain bases, inflicting heavy casualties on some Indonesian forces.

"Even if the UN mission were to make a report critical of Indonesia, there would be little sentiment at the UN to renew debate on the Timor issue."

January 17: The State Department reports the deception continues: "According to an intercepted message, Indonesia is making an all-out effort to camouflage its military presence in Timor in preparation for the January 19 visit of the UN special envoy to the island. The "cover-up", reportedly ordered by area commander General Murdani, will include:

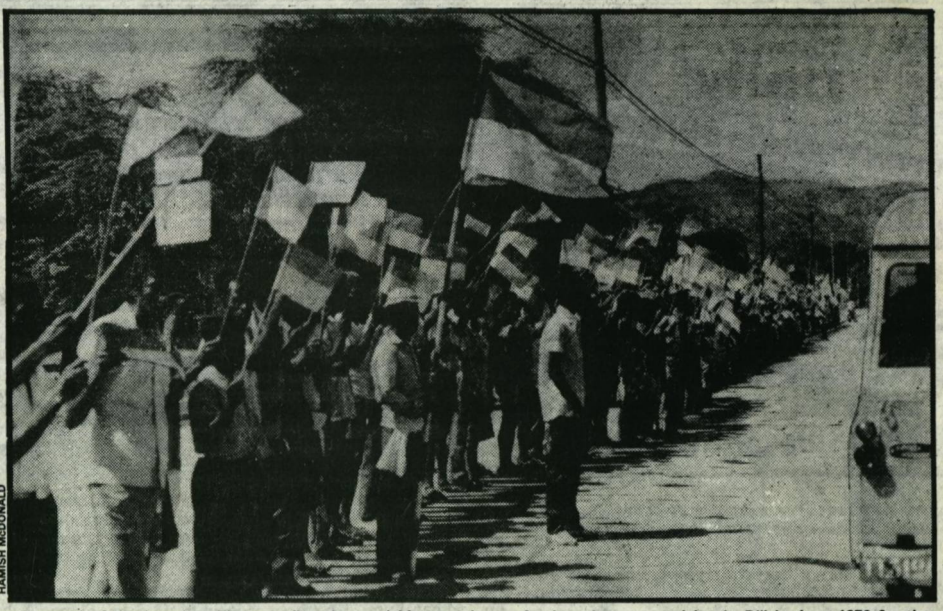
- "restricting Portuguese frigates from entering Timor waters;
- "limiting the envoy's survey to four "cleared" towns;
- "coaching Provisional Government personnel on explicit replies to questions; and
- "prohibiting Indonesian air force personnel from entering airports during the envoy's visit."

February 1: The State Department reports that the Indonesians actually considered sinking the ship carrying UN envoy: "UN envoy Guicciardi's attempts to arrange transportation to East Timor have aroused considerable concern among Indonesian leaders, according to a senior Indonesian intelligence official. Guicciardi, presently in Jakarta, is negotiating with Australia for permission to fly to Darwin to meet a Portuguese frigate which will take him to East Timor. The Indonesians are worried that, if the envoy reaches East Timor, he will find confirmation of the presence of a large Indonesian military force, and evidence that the Fretilin is stronger than is admitted.

"The degree of importance which the Indonesians assign to blocking Guicciardi's visit to East Timor is manifested by their plan to sink the Portuguese frigate with the envoy on board. Having rejected this option due to its ramifications, they are still considering whether to:

- "sink the vessel before it reaches Darwin;
- "request the Australians to deny permission for Guicciardi to visit Darwin; or failing that,
- "ask the Australians to refuse the Portuguese ship entry into Darwin.

"If efforts to obstruct the envoy's mission fail, the Indonesians may try to justify their presence in East Timor by publicising as yet unconfirmed reports that Indonesian communists are fighting with the Fretilin forces. Whatever action Indonesia decides to take, however, it may experience difficulty avoiding opprobrium at this month's ASEAN summit conference."



HAMISH McDONALD

The end of the invasion: Timorese line the roadside to welcome foreign observers arriving in Dili in June 1976 for the meeting of the People's Council which approved integration with Indonesia.

"The degree of importance which the Indonesians assign to blocking Guicciardi's visit to East Timor is manifested by their plan to sink the Portuguese frigate with the envoy on board. Having rejected this option due to its ramifications, they are still considering whether to sink the vessel before it reaches Darwin."

February 4: Blocking the UN continues: "Jakarta had managed, during the UN representative's visit to Indonesian-controlled areas in late January, to conceal all signs of Indonesian military forces.

"The Timorese had assured the mission that they did not want a referendum because they had already decided to integrate with Indonesia. The representative professed to be impressed that the Timorese had a functioning civil administration, which included some former members of Fretilin.

"On February 1, however, the representative flew to Darwin where, according to press reports, he accepted a Portuguese offer to carry him to Fretilin-held areas of Timor aboard a Portuguese frigate.

"Moving quickly to deny the frigate a place to land, the Indonesians have captured the main Fretilin port on the south coast, and the Jakarta-backed Timorese are threatening to turn back the ship by force.

On the same day the State Department reported that, "According to a reliable clandestine source, Indonesia is accelerating military operations in southern Timor, the last remaining Fretilin-controlled area, to leave UN envoy Guicciardi without 'any place to land, by sea or air'.

"Guicciardi, who recently completed a tour orchestrated by the Indonesians, has been frustrated in his efforts to meet with Fretilin leaders. According to recent intercepted messages, the Indonesians have intensified their occupation efforts in this area and now occupy key southern coastal towns."

February 10: UN gives in. "Indonesia has managed to thwart efforts of a UN representative to visit Fretilin-held areas of Timor. The representative left Australia for Geneva on Sunday after failing to arrange safe passage to eastern Timor to consult Fretilin leaders there. UN Secretary-General Waldheim, who is visiting Australia, said he did not consider the representative's mission terminated, but set no timetable for his return.

"The Indonesians paid lip service to the need to support the UN mission but put obstacles in its way, and accelerated the occupation of populated places and airfields in Timor. The Indonesians said they were unable to guarantee the mission's safe passage because of the unsettled situation and left Waldheim's representative with no alternative but to meet with Fretilin exiles in Australia.

"Jakarta will now attempt to delay the raising of the Timor issue at the UN, at least until it can argue that Timor's integration into Indonesia is an accomplished fact, and that the UN no longer has a role to play."

February 13: The Weekly Review under the heading Indonesia: The Last Act in Timor reported: "After several months of advancing into Eastern Timor at a snail's pace, the Indonesians, spurred by a desire to prevent the UN fact-finding mission from visiting Fretilin areas, in the past two weeks moved quickly to capture most of the remaining towns and all airfields.

"Jakarta should be able to establish quickly an adequate civil administration in the towns. In the interior, however, Indonesian commanders are finding it difficult to expand their control. Some units have suffered significant casualties and are having difficulty protecting their supply lines and rear areas. Jakarta has shown a determination to cope with remaining resistance.

"Fretilin forces, on the other hand, are gradually disintegrating. Faced with mounting casualties, dwindling supplies, and growing numbers of defections, they are withdrawing into the rugged mountains of the interior." □